

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

JUNE 1987

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COMMENTS ON THE SECOND DRAFT  
OF THE MASTER PLAN  
FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION  
1987 - 2000

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CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY  
EDUCATION COMMISSION



## COMMISSION REPORT 87-28

### PUBLISHED JUNE 1987

This document contains an expended version of the observations and suggestions of William H Pickens, executive director of the California Postsecondary Education Commission, to the Commission for the Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education regarding the second draft of that Commission's plan, dated May 1987

Mr Pickens presented his ideas orally to the Master Plan Commission at its May 19, 1987, meeting in Los Angeles This version includes an introduction to his remarks and then his prepared comments enlarged with his responses to questions from that Commission Following the introduction, his idea are organized under three primary headings characteristics of successful master plans (pp 1-2), suggestions for additions to the plan (pp 2-3), and suggestions about items that should be clarified (pp 3-4)

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## *Comments on the Second Draft of the Master Plan for Higher Education, 1987 - 2002*

**NOTE** The May meeting of the Commission for the Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education opened with testimony on the second draft of the new Master Plan. The Commission heard 12 speakers on Monday morning, May 18, and four during the afternoon -- Community College Chancellor Joshua Smith, University of California President David Gardner, State University Chancellor Ann Reynolds, and Chairman David Winter of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities.

Overall, Chancellors Smith and Reynolds and Chairman Winter applauded the report, questioned a few items here and there, and provided some details about how the ideas could be implemented or, in the case of the Community Colleges, are being implemented.

In contrast, President Gardner was quite critical of the draft, citing especially its lack of clarity about whether it replaces the 1960 Master Plan or is an amendment to that plan, the ambiguity in the identification of "lead responsibilities" for each segment, and the proposal to impose officially the 40/60 ratio of lower-division to upper-division students, moving it from its status as a "target" which was the original concept.

I was unable to join the group on Monday due to a prior obligation but was invited to appear on Tuesday morning, May 19. What follows are my prepared remarks expanded slightly by some comments in response to questions from members of the Master Plan Commission -- *William H. Pickens*

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission, I appreciate the opportunity to comment on your second draft of the Master Plan for Higher Education. I shall divide these remarks into some general observations about those elements that produce successful master plans and then turn to some specific ob-

servations on the document before you. Initially, though, let me recognize what a monumental undertaking your efforts represent -- that is, the systematic review of the enormous and complicated enterprise called postsecondary education in California.

### **Characteristics of successful master plans**

There is, of course, no single "right" way to construct a master plan. Each state has different traditions and expectations for its educational institutions, and this diversity results in different kinds of "plans." Nevertheless, I think the 1960 Master Plan is a good model for California, certainly in terms of the four elements of State-level planning that made it successful.

#### *Vision and simplicity*

The first element that distinguished the 1960 plan was its clear vision and relatively simple message, despite its considerable length. Its vision was that the institutions as they then existed would simply be swamped by all the new students of the 1960s who were the first wave of the "baby boom" generation. Its message was that the State would not be able to enroll those students without a plan that would indicate where the demand would occur and define the kinds of institutions where they might enroll. Further, the plan was clear that the State should create different kinds of institutions to use its resources most efficiently.

#### *Data-based trend analyses*

The second important element of the 1960 Master Plan was that its essential conclusions rested on large amounts of data -- namely enrollment projections, estimates of needed faculty, and likely costs.

Its examination of higher education started with a careful review of what quantifiable information existed and ended with a case for institutional change based on trends derived from this analysis and data

#### *Future orientation*

Third, the plan focused on future problems, not on those of the present, and it contained a distinct sense of urgency. Its proposals became even more compelling because they followed a description of future conditions if the current trends in higher education were not changed, and why the public interest would not be served by maintaining those "status quo" trends

#### *Emphasis on general processes rather than specific procedures*

Fourth, and in my judgment the most important element in insuring its success, the 1960 Master Plan defined institutional structures within which issues could be raised and decisions made. In terms of State policy, it sought primarily to identify a process and to describe objectives, rather than to specify how to achieve those objectives. In this way, its authors hoped to build a system whose evolution could successfully meet new challenges without having to be fundamentally altered at each step of the way

Despite its influence and its success -- made possible, in large measure, by these four fundamental elements of good State-level planning -- in retrospect the 1960 Master Plan contained notable gaps and defects, such as its reliance on trends of traditional college age youth and its inattention to racial and ethnic minorities. But the four fundamental characteristics of its process resulted in a blueprint that has served California well by (1) establishing an educational system that could enroll large numbers of students (California's higher education "participation rates" are consistently in the top five nationally), (2) creating a system that has maintained enough political credibility for the State to commit sufficient resources to develop nationally recognized institutions in each segment, and (3) promoting a diverse set of public institutions that do not, and have not been permitted to, all look alike

Certainly the circumstances are different now than 25 years ago. The State is much larger, its population more diverse, and its educational needs different. Nonetheless, the document before you appears to ratify most of the institutional structure in the 1960 Master Plan and therefore is a tribute to its success. In contrast, though, your document reflects a dissatisfaction more with California's present policies, practices, and procedures in postsecondary education than with its institutional framework. In addition, it goes into greater detail about the current situation of higher education than about challenges that may be different in the future. Further, its tendency to become extremely specific in certain areas -- such as details for the California Education Round Table -- and quite general in others -- such as references to "lead responsibilities" -- undermines its usefulness as a State-level "master plan."

#### **Suggestions for additions to the plan**

Let me turn now to some specific items within the text of your plan. First are six items that should be added

##### *1 Some notion of expected enrollment demand and how it should be accommodated*

Most master plans provide some estimates of demand in general for higher education and indicate how the State should consider the educational and fiscal trade-offs involved in different approaches to enrolling new students. While your document calls for changing the planning process, it is not explicit about how the State should develop a long-range approach to decisions about the kinds of facilities to accommodate these enrollments (such as new campuses, increased capacity for existing campuses, off-campus centers, or other means)

##### *2 Identification of State-level mechanisms to assess the impact of proposed changes in admissions requirements*

Your plan correctly identifies "links" among educational institutions as one of the most important priorities for State attention, and yet it makes little mention of the way by which, in actual practice,

these institutions are "linked" -- that is, through the admission requirements established by the four-year segments. We suggest that some State-level review of the potential impact of such changes before they are adopted is in the public's interest.

3 *The importance of access to timely and accurate data about students*

The Postsecondary Education Commission is currently chairing a task force to propose a uniform, student-specific data base that would maintain data about students as they progress through the public schools and into postsecondary education. If such a system is implemented, the State will be better able to evaluate the effectiveness of the "links" among educational institutions. Your positive recognition of this effort would be quite beneficial.

4 *An emphasis on undergraduate education at the University of California*

Initiatives to improve undergraduate education at the University are undermined by references to the University's "lead responsibility" in graduate education. By not emphasizing the importance of lower-division instruction at the University, the plan tends to reinforce the impression of a hierarchy based on "level" among the tripartite public system in California.

5 *Some indication of the magnitude of resources required to achieve the plan's objectives*

State officials need some idea of the resources involved in implementing the Commission's recommendations. This is also important in emphasizing that the State should be a "partner" in making postsecondary institutions more effective.

6 *Some recognition of non-accredited institutions and the adult schools in meeting educational needs*

Your Prologue speaks only of "accredited" institutions in the definition of postsecondary education. We would suggest that all educational institutions beyond high school be identified.

**Suggestions about items that should be clarified**

My second group of suggestions involves items that should be clarified in the next draft of the plan. This clarification is especially important so that the consequences of recommendations for one segment can be evaluated in terms of their implications for other segments or institutions.

1 *The meaning of "one educational system" (p. 1)*

There is not in California "one system ideally unified," even in pursuit of the goal of an educated citizenry. Perhaps the intention in using this phrase is to urge that education should be seen as a continuum and the institutions should be conscious of each other and of their interdependence. But the phrase *one educational system* overstates the point in ways that could result in confusion and cause this point to be misinterpreted.

2 *Where this document fits in the evolution of California's "Master Plan for Higher Education"*

Is this a "new" plan in the sense of replacing the 1960 Master Plan? Is it intended to replace the Donahoe Act of 1961? Or is it an amendment to the original plan and the statutes, policies, and practices since that time?

We would recommend that the document be clear about which provisions are designed to replace portions of the original plan, which should become law, and which are recommendations directed to the segments and institutions of education. In this regard, the Prologue is not clear in both declaring the need for "a new Master Plan" but one built "upon the successful elements of the old plan with major new provisions" (p. 3).

3 *Implications of the phrase "lead responsibility" for each segment*

The phrase *lead responsibility* is ambiguous for the segment identified for such responsibility and does not clarify the implications for other institutions. For instance, the Community Colleges are required to have lead responsibility "for academic and voca-

tional instruction at the lower division level for the great majority of 'college-age' and older students." Aside from the numbers alone, does this responsibility imply a priority for resources at this level or for educational innovation? The phrase is also applied to the State University and the University of California in other areas, with similar ambiguity.

#### 4 *The objective sought by requiring a 40/60 ratio*

The 40/60 ratio of lower-division to upper-division students in the University and State University was a general indicator in the 1960 Master Plan in order to (1) divert students to the then "junior" colleges, and (2) enhance the quality of freshmen applying to the four-year institutions. The purpose of the current proposal, which appears to make the ratio a legal requirement, is not clear and its educational and fiscal implications do not appear to have been considered thoroughly.

For example, is the 40/60 ratio intended primarily to increase the number of transfer students? Or to improve opportunities for low-income and minority students? Or to relieve enrollment pressures in the four-year segments? Or to save capital outlay costs through redirection? Or to emphasize graduate instruction at the University of California?

While the 40/60 requirement may help accomplish each of these goals, there are other means, such as budget limitations on the number of freshmen in the four-year institutions or alterations of the criteria to transfer, that might accomplish the purpose more directly and with fewer unintended consequences than would a legal requirement to maintain a 40/60 ratio.

#### 5 *How the governance and finance mechanisms of the Community Colleges are congruent and mutually reinforcing*

The "crisis of the Community Colleges" has resulted largely from the imposition of a State-determined finance system on local institutions governed by elected boards of trustees. The result has been a lack of clear accountability and a system fundamentally at odds with itself. The revenues are generated by a

rigid State formula while spending decisions are then made by local boards of trustees who must usually operate within tight fiscal constraints imposed through a budget process in which they played almost no part. In order to establish accountability clearly, the governance and the finance mechanisms for the colleges should be congruent and mutually reinforcing. Although specific in many details, the document's description of the "unified state/local system" would be improved by considering this issue directly.

### Conclusion

In sum, I believe that your document should both ratify many patterns and traditions in postsecondary education and also point the way in clear descriptions for a journey that will take several years and will be led by many diverse parties, including institutions and State officials, along the way. That journey should have "excellence" as one of its banners, but I would urge you not to allow that term to be defined in only a few, narrow ways. Rather, excellence should parallel the notion conveyed by the term "postsecondary" as distinct from "higher" education -- that is, there are many paths toward "excellence," since people have diverse educational needs and institutional responses should be dominated not by hierarchies (that is, "higher" or "lower") but by a vision of diverse institutions committed to effective service for their particular kinds of students.

Finally, I would like to commend your emphasis on the leadership responsibilities of governing boards and administrators. Despite the need for any master plan to define institutional arrangements, that alone cannot insure an equitable, excellent, and efficient system without leadership and commitment to progress among the people responsible for the institutions.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission, I sincerely appreciate this opportunity to appear before you and offer some observations on this draft document.

# CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

THE California Postsecondary Education Commission is a citizen board established in 1974 by the Legislature and Governor to coordinate the efforts of California's colleges and universities and to provide independent, non-partisan policy analysis and recommendations to the Governor and Legislature

## Members of the Commission

The Commission consists of 17 members. Nine represent the general public, with three each appointed for six-year terms by the Governor, the Senate Rules Committee, and the Speaker of the Assembly. Six others represent the major segments of postsecondary education in California. Two student members will be appointed by the Governor.

As of January 1992, the Commissioners representing the general public are:

Helen Z. Hansen, Long Beach, *Chair*  
Henry Der, San Francisco, *Vice Chair*  
Mim Andelson, Los Angeles  
C Thomas Dean, Long Beach  
Rosalind K. Goddard, Los Angeles  
Mari-Luci Jaramillo, Emeryville  
Lowell J Paige, El Macero  
Mike Roos, Los Angeles  
Stephen P Teale, M D , Modesto

Representatives of the segments are

William T Bagley, San Francisco, appointed by the Regents of the University of California,

Joseph D Carrabino, Los Angeles, appointed by the California State Board of Education,

Timothy P Haidinger, Rancho Santa Fe; appointed by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges,

Ted J Saenger, San Francisco; appointed by the Trustees of the California State University; and

Harry Wugalter, Ventura, appointed by the Council for Private Postsecondary and Vocational Education

The position of representative of California's independent colleges and universities is currently vacant, as are those of the two student representatives.

## Functions of the Commission

The Commission is charged by the Legislature and Governor to "assure the effective utilization of public postsecondary education resources, thereby eliminating waste and unnecessary duplication, and to promote diversity, innovation, and responsiveness to student and societal needs."

To this end, the Commission conducts independent reviews of matters affecting the 2,600 institutions of postsecondary education in California, including community colleges, four-year colleges, universities, and professional and occupational schools.

As an advisory body to the Legislature and Governor, the Commission does not govern or administer any institutions, nor does it approve, authorize, or accredit any of them. Instead, it performs its specific duties of planning, evaluation, and coordination by cooperating with other State agencies and non-governmental groups that perform those other governing, administrative, and assessment functions.

## Operation of the Commission

The Commission holds regular meetings throughout the year at which it debates and takes action on staff studies and takes positions on proposed legislation affecting education beyond the high school in California. By law, its meetings are open to the public. Requests to speak at a meeting may be made by writing the Commission in advance or by submitting a request before the start of the meeting.

The Commission's day-to-day work is carried out by its staff in Sacramento, under the guidance of its executive director, Warren H. Fox, Ph D, who is appointed by the Commission.

The Commission publishes and distributes without charge some 20 to 30 reports each year on major issues confronting California postsecondary education. Recent reports are listed on the back cover.

Further information about the Commission and its publications may be obtained from the Commission offices at 1020 Twelfth Street, Third Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814-3985, telephone (916) 445-7933.

# COMMENTS ON THE SECOND DRAFT OF THE MASTER PLAN FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, 1987-2002

## California Postsecondary Education Commission Report 87-28

ONE of a series of reports published by the Commission as part of its planning and coordinating responsibilities. Additional copies may be obtained without charge from the Publications Office, California Postsecondary Education Commission, Third Floor, 1020 Twelfth Street, Sacramento, California 95814-3985

Other recent reports of the Commission include

**87-9** Expanding Educational Equity in California's Schools and Colleges. A Review of Existing and Proposed Programs, 1986-87. A Report to the California Postsecondary Education Commission by Juan C. Gonzalez and Sylvia Hurtado of the Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA, January 20, 1987 (February 1987)

**87-10** Overview of the 1987-88 Governor's Budget for Postsecondary Education in California, Presented to the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee #1 by William H. Pickens, Executive Director, California Postsecondary Education Commission (March 1987)

**87-11** The Doctorate in Education: Issues of Supply and Demand in California (March 1987)

**87-12** Student Public Service and the "Human Corps." A Report to the Legislature in Response to Assembly Concurrent Resolution 158 (Chapter 165 of the Statutes of 1986) (March 1987)

**87-13** Standardized Tests Used for Higher Education Admission and Placement in California During 1986. The Second in a Series of Annual Reports Published in Accordance with Senate Bill 1758 (Chapter 1505, Statutes of 1984) (March 1987)

**87-14** Time Required to Earn the Bachelor's Degree. A Commission Review of Studies by the California State University and the University of California in Response to Senate Bill 2066 (1986) (March 1987)

**87-15** Comments on the Report of the California State University Regarding the Potential Effects of Its 1988 Course Requirements. A Report to the Legislature in Response to Assembly Concurrent Resolution 158 (Chapter 165 of the Statutes of 1986) (March 1987)

**87-16** Changes in California State Oversight of Private Postsecondary Education Institutions. A Staff Report to the California Postsecondary Education Commission (March 1987)

**87-17** Faculty Salaries in California's Public Universities, 1987-88. The Commission's 1986 Report to the Legislature and Governor in Response to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 51 (1965) (March 1987)

**87-18** Funding Excellence in California Higher Education. A Report in Response to Assembly Concurrent Resolution 141 (1986) (March 1987)

**87-19** The Class of '83 One Year Later. A Report on Follow-Up Surveys from the Commission's 1983 High School Eligibility Study (March 1987)

**87-20** Background Papers of the ACR 141 Task Force on Funding Excellence in Higher Education (March 1987)

**87-21** Educational Costs in Technical and Professional Fields of Study. A Report to the Legislature in Response to Assembly Concurrent Resolution 38 (Chapter 50 of the Statutes of 1986) (April 1987)

**87-22** Update of Community College Transfer Student Statistics, University of California and the California State University, Fall 1986 (April 1987)

**87-23** Annual Report on Program Review Activities, 1985-86. The Eleventh in a Series of Reports to the Legislature and the Governor on Program Review by Commission Staff and California's Public Colleges and Universities (June 1987)

**87-25** Institutional Reports on Pacific Rim Programs. Submissions by the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California in Response to Assembly Concurrent Resolution 82 (1986) (June 1987) (A supplement to Report 87-24)

**87-26** Major Gains and Losses. Part Two. A Staff Report on Shifts Since 1976 in the Popularity of Various Academic Disciplines as Fields of Study at California's Public Universities (June 1987)

**87-27** Faculty Salary Revisions. A Revision of the Commission's 1985 Methodology for Preparing Its Annual Reports on Faculty and Administrative Salaries and Fringe Benefit Costs (June 1987)